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FIRST LADY SHARON DAVIS ENCOURAGES TEACHER RECRUITMENT PLAN AT TEACHER SYMPOSIUM

SACRAMENTO _ California First Lady Sharon Davis today addressed representatives from California community colleges involved with the Teacher and Reading Development Partnership (TRDP) Grant Program and the California community colleges AmeriCorps Program at the *Second Annual Symposium on Teacher Recruitment and Preparation*.

“Since the governor took office, we made teaching a priority in California,” Mrs. Davis said. “We launched the most aggressive, most comprehensive teacher incentive program in the nation. The message was this: there is no higher calling, no greater public service, no contribution more valued than to become a teacher.”

Fulfilling his commitment to education, Governor Gray Davis has:

- Granted 1,200 teaching fellowships of \$20,000;
- Forgiven college loans for 18,000 teachers;
- Provided \$118 million in teacher recruitment block grants;
- Opened six Teacher Recruitment Centers where in the first hiring cycle 14,000 teachers were recruited and placed;
- Increased beginning teacher salaries to \$34,000, an increase of 21 percent;
- Passed the largest teacher tax credit in America. In the first year, 213,000 teachers claimed the credit of up to \$1,500;
- Passed an \$11.5 billion package of teacher retirement benefits;
- Made sure that beginning teachers have mentor support during the critical first two years in the classroom. Ninety-five percent of all eligible teachers participate;
- Instituted a first-ever system of peer assistance (PAR) for veteran teachers;
- Invested a record \$1.9 billion into discretionary funding, most of which was used for teacher salaries;
- Provided bonuses for teachers who earn national board certification; and
- Established the most rigorous professional development program in America. Already, 76,500 teachers have participated in this effort.

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FIRST LADY AT TEACHER SYMPOSIUM 222

The theme of the *Second Annual Symposium on Teacher Recruitment and Preparation* is **T.E.A.M., Together, Educating, Achieving, Motivating**. The goal of the Symposium is to promote a collaborative approach to recruiting, training and educating future teachers for K-12 and higher education and to set a plan to find 300,000 teachers needed in California schools within the decade.

The TRDP was established as a Governor's budget initiative, focusing on the Governor's goals to support early reading development and teacher internships. The TRDP program grants have been awarded by the California Community College Chancellor's Office. Each successful community college grantee will articulate their program with a four-year post secondary institution and offer a curriculum which includes classroom fieldwork assisting elementary students to develop improved reading skills. Partnerships will be established among community colleges, four-year institutions and school districts in California with the greatest need for teachers.

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